

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,445,437 to Miyazaki et al. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Applicant respectfully submits that the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose all of the features of the present invention. More specifically, the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose a liquid crystal display that includes, *inter alia*, “a pillar spacer provided such that a plurality of regions having an alignment defect . . . are formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1. Nor does the Miyazaki et al. reference disclose a liquid crystal that includes, *inter alia*, “a pillar spacer which is formed on the light shielding film and provided such that it protrudes from the light shielding film into adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 9.

One example of an embodiment defined by Claim 1 is shown in Applicant’s Figure 4, which shows a pillar spacer 18 that forms a plurality of alignment defect regions “a1,” “a2,” “a3,” and “a4.” As can be seen in Figure 4, the alignment defect regions “a1” through “a4” are formed across four neighboring pixel regions (region a1 is in a first pixel region, region a2 is in a second pixel region, region a3 is in a third pixel region and region a4 is in a fourth pixel region). It should be noted that although the Figure 4 embodiment includes *four* alignment defect regions formed across *four* neighboring pixel regions, Claim 1 merely states that the pillar spacer is provided such that a “plurality of regions” having an

alignment defect are “formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions.” Accordingly, Claim 1 is satisfied if the alignment defect is formed of two or more regions across two or more adjoining pixel regions.

In contrast, the devices of the Miyazaki et al. reference lack the claimed “pillar spacer provided such that a plurality of regions having an alignment defect . . . are formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1. For example, Figure 20 of the Miyazaki et al. reference shows pillar spacer 33 that forms a region having an alignment defect at area 44. As can be seen in Figure 20 of the Miyazaki et al. reference, area 44 is a single region formed in a TFT shielding area 36, and is not a “plurality of regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1. Further, area 44 is also only formed across a single TFT shielding area 36, and thus it is not “formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1.

The Figure 23 embodiment of Miyazaki et al. also fails to show the claimed “pillar spacer provided such that a plurality of regions having an alignment defect . . . are formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 1. Although Figure 23 shows an alignment defect 57 created by pillar spacer 33 is formed across blue pixel 32B, it is not “a plurality of regions . . . formed across adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as recited in Claim 1 (i.e., the defect region 57 of Figure 23 is only a single region formed across a single pixel, and not a plurality of regions formed across multiple adjoining pixels).

Thus, for the reasons discussed above, the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose all of the features of independent Claim 1. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of this §102 rejection of independent Claim 1 and associated dependent Claims 2-8.

With regard to independent Claim 9, Applicant respectfully submits that the Miyazaki et al. reference lacks “a pillar spacer which is formed on the light shielding film and provided such that it protrudes from the light shielding film into adjoining ones of the pixel regions.” One example of an embodiment that includes this feature is shown in Applicant’s Figures 5 and 6, which show pillar spacer 18 that protrudes into four adjacent pixel regions (i.e., it “protrudes into adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 9). It should be noted that although the embodiment of Applicant’s Figures 5 and 6 includes a pillar spacer that protrudes into *four* neighboring pixel regions, Claim 9 merely states that the pillar spacer protrudes into “adjoining ones of the pixel regions.” Accordingly, Claim 9 is satisfied if the pillar spacer protrudes into two or more adjoining pixel regions.

In contrast, none of the embodiments of the Miyazaki et al. reference include a pillar spacer that “protrudes into adjoining ones of the pixel regions,” as defined in independent Claim 9. For example, in Figure 20 of the Miyazaki et al. reference, pillar spacer 33 does not protrude into any of the pixel regions, but is instead formed in a TFT shielding area 36. Nor is this feature shown in the Figure 23 embodiment of the Miyazaki et

al. reference, in which the pillar spacer 33 once again does not protrude into any of the pixel regions, but is instead formed on light shielding layer 36.

Further, even assuming *arguendo* that the area between the pixels can be considered as part of one pixel or the adjacent pixel, the pillar spacers of Miyazaki et al still fail to protrude into “adjoining ones” of the pixel regions, but instead only protrude into a single pixel regions. For example, in the Figure 23 embodiment of the Miyazaki et al. reference, spacer 33 can be considered as being formed to protrude on either the pixel regions above it or the pixel regions below it. However, it is unreasonable to consider it as protruding into both pixels regions because there is no clear way of dividing the area between the pixels (i.e., area 36) to be considered as part of both adjacent areas. In other words, area 36 can be considered as part of area 32R (shown to the left of area 36) or it can be considered as part of the area to the right of area 36. However, since there is no vertical line dividing area 36 into two or more parts, area 36 cannot reasonable be considered as part of both the area to its left (area 32R) and as part of the area to its right.

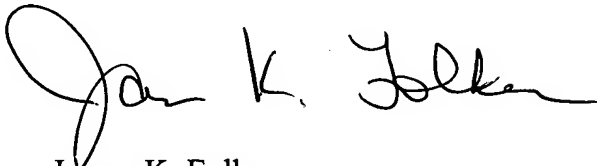
Thus, for the reasons discussed above, the Miyazaki et al. reference fails to disclose all of the features of independent Claim 9. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of this §102 rejection of independent Claim 9.

For all of the above reasons, Applicant requests reconsideration and allowance of the claimed invention. Should the Examiner be of the opinion that a telephone conference

would aid in the prosecution of the application, or that outstanding issues exist, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

GREER, BURNS & CRAIN, LTD.

By 
James K. Folker
Registration No. 37,538

September 28, 2005

Suite 2500
300 South Wacker Drive
Chicago, Illinois 60606
(312) 360-0080

Customer No. 24978

P:\DOCS\132468598\917594.DOC